

If ought can teach us ought, Affliction's  
looks (Making us look into ourselves so  
near) Teach us to *know ourselves*,  
beyond all books ! Or all the learned  
Schools that ever were !

This Mistress, lately, plucked me by the  
ear, And many a golden lesson hath  
me taught! Hath made my Senses  
quick, and Reason clear! Reformed my  
Will, and rectified my Thought!

So do the winds and thunders cleanse  
the air! So working seas settle and  
purge the wine! So lopt and pruned  
trees do flourish fair! So doth the  
fire the drossy gold refine !

Neither MINERVA, nor the learned Muse,  
Nor Rules of Art, nor Precepts of the  
Wise, Could in my brain, those beams  
of skill infuse, As but the glance of this  
Dame's angry eyes.

She, within lists, my ranging mind hath  
brought. That now beyond myself I  
list not go ' Myself am Centre of my  
circling thought! Only Myself, I  
study, learn, and know!

I *know* my Body's of so frail a kind,  
As force without, fevers within,  
can kill! I *know* the heavenly  
nature of my Mind ; But 'tis  
corrupted, both in Wit and Will!

I *know* my Soul hath power to know all  
things, Yet is she blind and  
ignorant in all! I *know* I am one of  
Nature's little kings, Yet to the  
least and vilest things am thrall!

I *know* my Life's a pain, and but a span !  
I *know* my Sense is mocked with every  
thing ! And to conclude, I *know* myself  
a Man ; Which is a proud, and yet a  
wretched thing !